Tokyo-led Asian broad band programme

*265. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India and Japan have signed an MoU for participation of India in the Tokyo-led Asian Broad Band Programme; and

(b) if so, the details of the agreement?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI DAYANIDHI MARAN): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

However, on 18th January, 2005, a Joint Statement was signed by the Minister of Communications and Information Technology of India and the Minister for Internal Affairs & Communications of Japan in Tokyo, Japan during the visit of Hon'ble Minister of Communications and Information Technology to Japan.

In the Joint Statement, the two Ministers confirmed that Information Communication Technology (ICT) is a major driving force in promoting sustainable economic & social development, improving quality of life, helping people achieve their full potential and maintaining cultural diversities.

The two Ministers affirmed that Asia Broad Band Programme, inter-aiia, can make a significant contribution to the development of information society in both countries as well as in the Asia-Pacific region as **a** whole. The two Ministers further confirmed the necessity to strengthen cooperation between Japan and India in the field of ICT including encouraging the use of affordable technologies for broadband network.

Water harvesting

*266. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that it is proposed to make water harvesting a part of MPLADS to control water crisis in the country;